

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please replace the pending claims with the following claim listing:

1-4. (Cancelled)

5. (New) A substrate for growth of nitride semiconductor for growth of a nitride semiconductor layer on a sapphire substrate comprising:

a layer including N, O and Al as separately provided on the sapphire substrate, and wherein the layer contacts with the sapphire substrate at a first surface thereof and is formed such that a proportion of N to a composition ratio of N, O and Al in the first surface is smaller than that of N to the composition ratio of N, O and Al in a second surface contacting with a nitride semiconductor layer and that a proportion of O to the composition ratio in the first surface is larger than that of O to the composition ratio in the second surface.

6. (New) The substrate for growth of nitride semiconductor according to claim 5, wherein a cap layer made of  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$  is provided as the uppermost layer of the substrate for growth of nitride semiconductor.

7. (New) A substrate for growth of nitride semiconductor for growth of a nitride semiconductor layer on a sapphire substrate comprising:

an  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$  layer as separately provided on the sapphire substrate; and

either one layer of an AlON layer or an AlN layer provided on said  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$  layer.

8. (New) The substrate for growth of nitride semiconductor according to claim 7, wherein a cap layer made of  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$  is provided as the uppermost layer of the substrate for growth of nitride semiconductor.

9. (New) A substrate for growth of nitride semiconductor for growth of a nitride semiconductor layer on a sapphire substrate comprising:

an  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$  layer as separately provided on the sapphire substrate;

an AlON layer which is a first layer;

an AlN layer which is a second layer; and

a structure in which the first layer and the second layer are deposited on the  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$  layer in this order.

10. (New) The substrate for growth of nitride semiconductor according to claim 9, wherein a cap layer made of  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$  is provided as the uppermost layer of the substrate for growth of nitride semiconductor.